

Remarks:

The above amendments and these remarks are responsive to the Office action dated November 15, 2005. Claims 1-38 are pending in the application. Claims 1-23 have been rejected and claims 24-38 are withdrawn from consideration. Pursuant to this Amendment, claims 1, 8, 14, 22 and 23 have been amended. In addition, the paragraph beginning on page 4, line 4 in the Specification has been amended.

In the Office action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-5 and 8-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 4,681,060 to Masters ("Masters"). Claims 6, 7 and 14-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Masters in view of FR 2473457 A to Liurette ("Liurette"). Further, the Examiner indicated that the Specification should be amended to reflect the patent numbers of applications incorporated by reference. In view of the amendments above, and the remarks below, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111 and allowance of the pending claims.

Specification Updates

The specification has been updated to include patent numbers 6,729,259 and 6,948,442 corresponding respectively to applications 10/215,361 and 10/726,969 incorporated by reference.

Rejections under 35 USC § 102

Masters does not anticipate claims 1-5 and 8-13 as amended under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) because it does not disclose each feature of the claims. Provided below are some of the claim features that are not shown in Masters.

Masters does not disclose an item of outfitting coalesced to a weld coalesced to the surface of the body as recited in amended claim 1. The Examiner asserts that foam block B in Masters is an item of outfitting, but foam block B is not coalesced to a weld coalesced to the surface of the body. Instead, foam block B is a part of frame section 20, which Masters merely states may be fastened to a hull by "a number of suitable fasteners...." (Col. 2, line 59).

The Examiner's assertion that Masters discloses an item of outfitting welded to an interior of a body is not correct. Rather, the Examiner's reference to col. 3, line 17 states that a "heat weld method may be utilized to adhere or laminate the foam blocks and the thin plastic web together." (emphasis added). At no point does Masters disclose foam block B or any other item welded to the hull. Forming a structural component by welding parts together and attaching that structural component to the kayak by "suitable fasteners" does not disclose an item of outfitting welded to an interior of a body.

Masters does not disclose a weld as recited in amended claim 1. A "suitable fastener" does not disclose a weld comprised at least partially of the weldable polymer material, much less a weld that is coalesced to the surface of the body. Rather, Applicants' specification describes how one skilled in the art would understand "suitable fastener" to mean a bolt or rivet. Without the aid of hindsight, Masters fails to disclose a weld as recited in amended claim 1.

For at least these reasons, Masters does not disclose each feature of claims 1-5 and 8-13 as amended.

Rejections under 35 USC § 103

Combining Masters with Liurette does not disclose or suggest each feature of claims 6, 7 or 14-23 rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Liurette discloses fusion welding two halves of a surfboard together to form a whole surfboard and, as discussed above, Masters discloses fastening a foam block to a hull by "suitable fasteners." However, this combination does not disclose or suggest a self-propelled watercraft as recited in the rejected claims. A feature common to claims 6, 7 and 14-23 as amended is discussed below to establish the non-obviousness of the claims in view of the proposed combination.

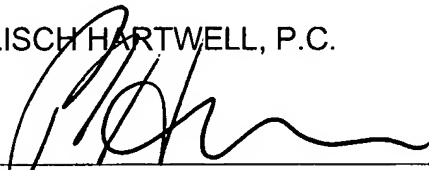
Combining Masters with Liurette does not disclose or suggest a self-propelled watercraft comprising an item of outfitting coalesced to a weld which is coalesced to the surface of a body. Instead, Masters discloses generically fastening a foam block, which the Examiner asserts is an item of outfitting, to a hull by "suitable fasteners." Further, Liurette is not directed to items of outfitting, but rather is directed to means of forming a surfboard body. Thus, combining these references does not result in the self-propelled watercrafts recited in amended claims 6, 7 and 14-23; that is, the proposed combination fails to disclose a self-propelled watercraft comprising an item of outfitting coalesced to a weld, which is coalesced to the surface of the body.

For at least these reasons, combining Masters with Liurette does not disclose each feature of claims 6, 7 and 14-23 as amended. Accordingly, this combination does not render amended claims 6, 7 and 14-23 obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Therefore, claims 6, 7 and 14-23 are allowable.

Applicants believe that this application is now in condition for allowance, in view of the above Amendments and Remarks. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner issue a Notice of Allowability covering the pending claims. If the Examiner has any questions, or if a telephone interview would in any way advance prosecution of the application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney of record.

Respectfully submitted,

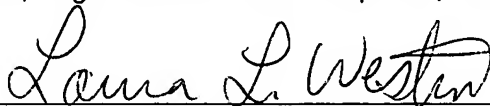
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on April 27, 2006.



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